

Social Marketing

With implementation of the **Road Crew** program, you will be among the pioneers in applying social marketing concepts to a crucial community safety issue. Just as commercial marketers develop products, set appropriate prices, consider the best times and places to be available and promote their products through advertising and incentives, social marketers do the same things to influence individuals to change their behavior.

Two major principles of social marketing are recognition of free choice and individual decision-making in our society. With drunk driving, the decision we are trying to influence is how to get home, and the choice we are offering is a ride via another transportation option. To motivate people to change behavior, the program must fit into their lifestyles and be viewed as an appealing, alternative way to get home without driving themselves. If the target doesn't see the service as being "cool," they won't freely choose it.

Ride programs that were developed in the pilot communities offered benefits to the potential customers that they could not get from driving themselves. In order to change behavior, the target must see a clear benefit in changing. Remember, this group freely chooses to drive while impaired, so you need to develop an alternative that he sees as providing a greater benefit than the current choice. A clear understanding of why members of the target market behave the way they do, as well as the opportunities and challenges a new ride service presents to them are crucial elements to creating the best new product.

Understanding and Implementing Social Marketing Concepts

Marketing the decision to take another ride home to be as natural as, say, ordering pizzas for a party may seem easy on the surface. Like pizza, the ride alternative must be appealing, something one would enjoy sharing with friends. It must also be convenient and home-delivered in a reasonable timeframe. And finally, it must be priced so that customers appreciate its value and buy it again. But marketing rides as fun, economical and crowd-pleasing is actually quite complex. If you were to start from scratch without the **Road Crew** you would need to develop a new product and brand, offer the right incentives, and launch the right promotion to create product identification and brand loyalty for your community to be successful.



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One significant benefit of establishing a **Road Crew** program is extensive groundwork has already been completed, laying a foundation for a successful program. There is a market-tested brand specifically designed to appeal to the 21-to-34-year-old bar crowd, with a logo and slogan: "**The Road Crew – Beats Driving.**" There are posters that can be customized with a local phone number that convey the message that using the **Road Crew** is a fun, convenient, hassle-free way to party with friends and get home safely. And, finally, there are countless examples of lessons learned from the demonstration communities that will help you take advantage of their best practices. Any community utilizing the **Road Crew** toolbox should start with this baseline in customizing your local efforts, keeping in mind the core elements of a social marketing approach:

- ▶ **Target Market:** You need a clear understanding of who you are focusing on with this effort, so you can design a program that is specifically tailored to their needs and interests. Be prepared to describe your target market with respect to needs, lifestyles, and decision making processes
- ▶ **Product:** You need to offer an alternative to the "product" they are currently using. With drinking and driving, the current product may be described as driving their own vehicle out for the evening, and then driving the same vehicle home regardless of the amount of alcohol consumed. Saying "don't do that" is not a new product. You need to offer another option for a safe trip home. Later in this toolbox, you'll see product ideas that have worked in other communities.
- ▶ **Incentives:** Incentives may be thought of as the means used to get someone to try a new product and then to build repeat use of the product. For example, with commercial marketing, product managers might offer a free sample of the product to encourage an initial trial, then offer two-for-one coupons to build repeat usage. Once your **Road Crew** transportation option is developed, you can work with advisors in the target market to devise incentives that will attract riders.
- ▶ **Promotion:** A solid plan will have messages that are specifically focused on the target market, presenting the new product in a way that makes it appealing. Promotion is used to create identification with the product and build brand loyalty over time. The benefits of a good product need to be presented in a way that ties to the target's values and lifestyle. The **Road Crew** logo and theme provide a great start in coming up with original promotions that will work for your community.

